

DETAILED ACTION

Drawings

1. The drawings are objected to as failing to comply with 37 CFR 1.84(p)(4) because reference character "524" has been used to designate both biasing spring (Page 8 Line 11) and circular member (Page 8 Line 15). Corrected drawing sheets in compliance with 37 CFR 1.121(d) are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. Any amended replacement drawing sheet should include all of the figures appearing on the immediate prior version of the sheet, even if only one figure is being amended. Each drawing sheet submitted after the filing date of an application must be labeled in the top margin as either "Replacement Sheet" or "New Sheet" pursuant to 37 CFR 1.121(d). If the changes are not accepted by the examiner, the applicant will be notified and informed of any required corrective action in the next Office action. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

2. The drawings are objected to as failing to comply with 37 CFR 1.84(p)(5) because they do not include the following reference sign(s) mentioned in the description: 442' (Page 6 Lines 18 and 20). Corrected drawing sheets in compliance with 37 CFR 1.121(d) are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. Any amended replacement drawing sheet should include all of the figures appearing on the immediate prior version of the sheet, even if only one figure is being amended. Each drawing sheet submitted after the filing date of an application must be labeled in the top margin as either "Replacement Sheet" or "New Sheet" pursuant to 37 CFR 1.121(d). If the changes are not accepted by the examiner, the

Art Unit: 3723

applicant will be notified and informed of any required corrective action in the next Office action. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

Specification

3. The disclosure is objected to because of the following informalities: On Page 2 Line 6 the specification refers to "U.S. Pat. No. 4,5577,0111", however this is not a valid US Patent Number. It is unclear as to which document the specification is making reference to.

Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Objections

4. Claim 34 is objected to because of the following informalities: Claim 34 depends from Claim 28, which has been canceled. The Examiner believes that the Applicant meant Claim 34 to depend from Claim 1 and is treating it as such.

Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

5. Claims 1, 22, 31-32, and 34-37 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Nichols, US 4,627,126.

Nichols discloses the claimed invention including a body (10) having a handle (22) and a support portion (12), the support portion including a longitudinally directed support element extending substantially transversely from the handle (38, as it expands in a direction transverse from the handle as shown in Figure 2) the support element having first and second opposite ends (ends of different mandrel elements 36 that may be radially opposite, shown in Figure 3) and first and second lint roll supports (each 36) extending substantially transversely from the opposite ends of the support element and adapted for receiving a longitudinally supporting a lint roll (32) therebetween in substantially parallel relationship to the support element (see Figure 2), wherein the support element includes an additional cleaning element mounted longitudinally therealong (16). Regarding claim 22, the body is a one piece, monolithic body (see Figures). Regarding claim 31, the additional cleaning element is considered to be a "wipe strip" or a "crumb picker" (as it is used by wiping and is capable of picking up crumbs, Column 2 Lines 7-14, Column 3 Lines 33-52). Regarding claim 32, the additional cleaning element is removably mounted in the support element (as a user is capable of breaking, ripping, using an adhesive remover, or tearing the element in order to remove it from a support element). Regarding claim 34, the cleaning element is fixedly mounted in the support element (by adhesive, Column 2 Lines 61-62). Regarding claim 35, the additional cleaning element runs between the first and second ends of the support element (Figure 2). Regarding claim 36, the cleaning apparatus

comprises a longitudinally extending support element (12) with a first cleaning element longitudinally mounted therealong between first and second ends (16, see Figures), an elongated handle connected substantially midway along the support element and extending transversely therefrom (22), and a pair of parallel angularly directed lint roll support legs (36) extending transversely from either end of the support element (see Figure 2) and in a direction at least partly away from the handle (Figure 2), the legs removably supporting a lint roll (32) longitudinally therebetween (see Figures 2-3).

Regarding claim 37, the extending support legs and the support element define a first plane (if one is looking at Figure 1, the first plane would include a line drawn through the leftmost and bottommost support legs 36 down to a portion of 12), and the extending handle and the support element define a second plane (if one is looking at Figure 2, the second plane would include a line drawn longitudinally through 22 to 12), and the two planes forming an obtuse angle (as those two lines intersect and form an obtuse angle).

6. Claim 36 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Newman et al., US 2002/0187888.

Newman et al. disclose the claimed invention including a cleaning apparatus comprising a longitudinally extending support element (22) with a first cleaning element longitudinally mounted therealong between first and second ends (lint roll 16, see Figures), an elongated handle connected substantially midway along the support element and extending transversely therefrom (18, 12), and a pair of parallel angularly directed lint roll support legs (24, 26) extending transversely from either end of the support element (see Figures 1-3) and in a direction at least partly away from the

handle (see Figures 1-3), the legs removably supporting a lint roll (16) longitudinally therebetween (see Figures).

7. Claim 36 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Jaffri, US 6,014,788.

Jaffri discloses the claimed invention including a cleaning apparatus comprising a longitudinally extending support element (21) with a first cleaning element longitudinally mounted therealong between first and second ends (11, see Figures), an elongated handle connected substantially midway along the support element and extending transversely therefrom (one of handles 17 as shown in Figures 14-17), and a pair of parallel angularly directed lint roll support legs (22) extending transversely from either end of the support element (see Figures) and in a direction at least partly away from the handle (see Figures), the legs removably supporting a lint roll (11) longitudinally therebetween (see Figures).

8. Claim 36 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Jaffri, US 6,014,788.

Jaffri discloses the claimed invention including a cleaning apparatus comprising a longitudinally extending support element (21) with a first cleaning element longitudinally mounted therealong between first and second ends (11, see Figures), an elongated handle connected substantially midway along the support element and extending transversely therefrom (one of handles 17 as shown in Figures 14-17), and a pair of parallel angularly directed lint roll support legs (22) extending transversely from either end of the support element (see Figures) and in a direction at least partly away from the

handle (see Figures), the legs removably supporting a lint roll (11) longitudinally therebetween (see Figures).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

9. Claims 1, 3-6, 31-32, and 34 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Sohmer, US 3,742,547 in view of Rosenkrantz, US 5,553,344.

Sohmer discloses the claimed invention including a body having a handle (12) and a support portion (11), the support portion including a longitudinally directed support element extending substantially transversely from the handle (11), the support element having first and second opposite ends (ends of 17, 18) and first and second lint roll supports extending substantially transversely from the opposite ends of the support element (19, 20) and adapted for supporting a lint roll therebetween (10, see Figures 1-2) in substantial parallel relationship to the support element (as the roll 10 is substantially parallel to a substantial portion of 11 as shown in Figure 1). Regarding claim 3, each lint roll support includes a leg transversely extending from the support element (leg is considered to be 22, 26) and a lint roll support member carried on the legs (23). Regarding claims 4-5, there are means for rotatably mounting the lint roll support members on the legs that comprises a stem projecting from each leg (the means being the flange of 27) and the lint roll support member rotatably mounted on the

Art Unit: 3723

stems (Column 2 Line 60 to Column 3 Line 7). Regarding claim 6, there is a means for slidably mounting each leg in the corresponding ends support element (when support element is 20, Column 3 Lines 8-12, the “means” being the loose fit of 20 into 29). Sohmer does not disclose an additional cleaning element carried on the support element.

Rosenkrantz teaches a lint pick up device that includes a support element (14) that extends from a handle (18, 20), wherein there is adhesive “lint” sheets (36) supported by the support element, and there is an additional cleaning element carried on the support element (38) that is a “wipe strip” or “crumb picker” in that it is a scraping blade capable of picking up crumbs in order to loosen debris that may be stuck (Column 3 Lines 14-21). Regarding claims 32 and 34, the cleaning element (38) is capable of being removably or fixedly mounted in the support (in that it is shown fixed “in the support” in Figure 1 and is capable of being removed by breaking or cutting).

It would have been obvious for one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify the support element of Sohmer to further include an additional cleaning element carried thereon, as Rosenkrantz teaches, in order to provide a blade or strip or picker to further aid in loosening debris attached to a surface before attempting to employ an adhesive lint surface to pick up the debris from that surface.

10. Claims 18 and 20-21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Sohmer, US 3,742,547 and Rosenkrantz, US 5,553,344 as applied to claim 1 in view of Manzi, US 4,519,566.

Sohmer discloses all elements mentioned above including a handle (12) and Rosenkrantz discloses all elements mentioned above, however neither disclose an end cap affixed to one end of the handle.

Manzi teaches an end cap (3, 5) affixed to an end of a handle (6), the end cap comprise a hanger portion (4), and wherein the end cap is removably mounted to the handle portion (via screw 8) so that the end cap will give an implement handle a constant capacity for storage (Column 1 Lines 25-37).

It would have been obvious for one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify the handle of Sohmer and Rosenkrantz by including a removable end cap having a hanger portion, as Manzi teaches, in order to provide a storage means for hanging a cleaning implement.

11. Claims 1, 3, 6-9, 22, 31-32, and 34 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Newman et al., US 2002/0187888 in view of Rosenkrantz, US 5,553,344.

Newman et al. disclose the claimed invention including a body (18, 20) having a handle (18) and a support portion (20), and the support portion including a longitudinally directed support element extending substantially transversely from the handle (22), the support element having first and second opposite ends (left and rightmost ends of 22, see Figures) and first and second roll supports (24, 26) extending substantially transversely from the opposite ends of the support element (at 42, 58) and adapted and capable of receiving and supporting a lint roll in between in substantial parallel relationship to the support element (see Figures 1-3, as 24, 26 at 42 and 58 are capable

Art Unit: 3723

of receiving roller structures). Regarding claim 3, each lint roll support includes a leg transversely extending from the support element (portions 42 and 58 of 24 and 26) and a lint roll support member carried on the legs (unlabeled portions shown in Figures 2-3 from which 48 and 64 extend). Regarding claims 6-7, there are means for slidably mounting each leg in the corresponding ends of the support element that comprises a slide portion extending from each leg (40, 56), the slide portion movably disposed within a channel the support element (channel is 30, see Figures; paragraphs 22-23). Regarding claims 8-9, there is a biasing means being a spring (70) coupled to the slide portions of each of the legs (see Figures) for normally biasing the legs toward each other at a first spacing to support a roll between the legs (paragraph 24). Regarding claim 22, the body is a one piece, monolithic body (see Figures). Newman et al. does not disclose an additional cleaning element carried on the support element.

Rosenkrantz teaches a lint pick up device that includes a support element (14) that extends from a handle (18, 20), wherein there is adhesive "lint" sheets (36) supported by the support element, and there is an additional cleaning element carried on the support element (38) that is a "wipe strip" or "crumb picker" in that it is a scraping blade capable of picking up crumbs in order to loosen debris that may be stuck (Column 3 Lines 14-21). Regarding claims 32 and 34, the cleaning element (38) is capable of being removably or fixedly mounted in the support (in that it is shown fixed "in the support" in Figure 1 and is capable of being removed by breaking or cutting).

It would have been obvious for one of ordinary skill in the art the time of the invention to modify the support element of Newman et al. to further include an additional

Art Unit: 3723

cleaning element carried thereon, as Rosenkrantz teaches, in order to provide a blade or strip or picker to further aid in loosening debris attached to a surface before attempting to paint or treat the surface with the roller.

12. Claims 23 and 26-27 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Sohmer, US 3,742,547 and Rosenkrantz, US 5,553,344 as applied to claim 1 in view of Rubino, US 5,230,303.

Sohmer and Rosenkrantz disclose all elements previously disclosed above, however do not disclose a liquid storage chamber within the handle or a fluid dispenser means. The device of Sohmer and Rosenkrantz is capable of being used to remove pet hair.

Rubino discloses a body having a handle (21) and a support portion (11a), the support portion receiving a particle removing material (17), the support portion including a support element extending from the handle (12) and first and second lint roll supports (ends of 16) adapted for supporting a lint roll therebetween (17), the first and second lint roll supports extending from the support element (as end portions of 16 extends from 11a, see Figures 4, 5, and 7). Particularly regarding claim 23, there is a liquid storage chamber within the handle (31; Figure 6) and fluid dispenser means disposed in a fluid communication with the liquid storage chamber for dispensing fluid for utilization during animal grooming (Figures 6 and 8; Column 3 Line 43 to Column 4 Line 5; includes 20). Regarding claims 26-27, the fluid dispenser means is removably mounted on the handle (via threads 29 and/or 32), via a plurality of threads carried on the handle (not labeled, see Figures 6 and 8) and a plurality of threads carried on the fluid dispenser means (29

or 32) engageable with the threads on the handle to couple the fluid dispenser means to the handle (see Figures 6 and 8).

It would have been obvious for one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to substitute the handle of Sohmer and Rosenkrantz for a handle including a liquid storage chamber within the handle and fluid dispenser means in fluid communication with the chamber for dispensing fluid, as Rubino teaches, so that the apparatus would have a means for introducing liquids simultaneously to a surface, such as a pet, for additional treatment at the same time as cleaning.

13. Claim 33 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Sohmer, US 3,742,547 and Rosenkrantz, US 5,553,344 as applied to claim 32 in view of Shea, US 3,457,579.

Sohmer and Rosenkrantz disclose all elements previously disclosed above, however do not disclose that the additional cleaning element is removably mounted by means of a slide-in fit.

Shea teaches a squeegee device that has a wipe strip blade (22) that is slide-in mounted to a support element so that a user can easily remove and replace the blade after it is worn or broken with another new blade (Column 3 Lines 9-16).

It would have been obvious for one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify the support element and wipe strip blade of Sohmer and Rosenkrantz so that it is removably mounted by means of a slide-in fit, as Shea teaches, so that when the wipe strip needs replacing, it can be done easily by sliding out the old strip and sliding in a new strip.

Response to Arguments

14. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1, 3-9, 18, 20-23, 26-27, and 31-37 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

The Applicants arguments were drawn only to the limitation of "an additional cleaning element being mounted along the support element of the support portion" previously found in claim 28, now in claim 1. The Applicant directs the arguments towards Rubino, which was found to previously anticipate claims 1 and 28. Claim 1 has been amended in such a way that Rubino no longer anticipates claim 1. It is particularly noted however that claim 28 had been previously rejected over the combination of Sohmer in view of Rosenkrantz and Newman et al. in view of Rosenkrantz. The Applicant did not present any arguments directed towards either of these combinations.

Conclusion

15. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of

the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

16. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Laura C. Guidotti whose telephone number is (571) 272-1272. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Thursday, 7:30am - 5pm, alternating Fridays.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Joseph Hail can be reached on (571) 272-4485. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Laura C Guidotti/
Patent Examiner
Art Unit 3723

lcg